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TO RUEHTI/AMEMBASSY TIRANA IMMEDIATE 4046
RUEHSF/AMEMBASSY SOFIA IMMEDIATE 4044
RUEHTH/AMEMBASSY ATHENS IMMEDIATE 1412
RUEHSQ/AMEMBASSY SKOPJE IMMEDIATE 7577
RUEHLJ/AMEMBASSY LJUBLJANA IMMEDIATE 6863
RUEHVJ/AMEMBASSY SARAJEVO IMMEDIATE 2387
RUEHVB/AMEMBASSY ZAGREB IMMEDIATE 3384
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME IMMEDIATE 2638
RUEHBM/AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST IMMEDIATE 2281
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA IMMEDIATE 0396
RUEHKV/AMEMBASSY KYIV IMMEDIATE 1960
RUEHPS/AMEMBASSY PRISTINA IMMEDIATE 6588
INFO NATO EU COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUEHBW/AMEMBASSY BELGRADE IMMEDIATE 0624
RUEHPOD/AMEMBASSY PODGORICA IMMEDIATE 2366

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 STATE 107044

SENSITIVE
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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: ACTION REQUEST: SUPPORT FOR MONTENEGRO'S AND
SERBIA'S MEMBERSHIP IN SEDM

REF: 08 STATE 114399

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¶1. (U) This is an action request cable. Please see paragraphs 4-5.

¶2. (SBU) BACKGROUND: In previous Southeastern Europe Defense Ministerial (SEDM) membership discussions, the U.S. objected to Serbian membership in SEDM without a firm commitment by the Government of Serbia to not/not block its neighbors from membership in the future, particularly Kosovo (reftel), while other SEDM member countries have supported Serbia's membership. After careful review, the Department now requests that Posts convey to host governments on an urgent basis that the U.S. will no longer oppose Serbian membership into SEDM, and is ready to join consensus to admit Serbia at the October 20-21 ministerial hosted by Bulgaria in Sofia. The SEDM Secretariat in Bulgaria will also undertake to convey to SEDM member countries that we support Montenegro's and Serbia's joining SEDM immediately. However, we have a very short timeframe to inform SEDM members and to confirm support for Montenegro and Serbia to join at the next ministerial October 20-21. Posts are therefore requested to inform appropriate host government officials October 16 if at all possible and report back the same day. Department apologizes for the deadline, but formally bringing on board all members in time for the ministerial requires immediate action. Serbian integration into regional organizations will reinforce gains made toward creating a stable and peaceful Western Balkans; we also want to recognize progress by Serbia in defense reform, and encourage further concrete steps.

¶3. (SBU) Both Montenegro and Serbia applied to join SEDM in ¶2008. Italy and Romania strongly objected to Montenegrin admission into SEDM without Serbia. U.S. policy on Montenegrin membership in SEDM remains the same: We strongly believe that Montenegro should be admitted to SEDM immediately. Despite Romanian and Italian efforts to link the two, Montenegro has met the requirements for membership and its participation in SEDM should not be tied to Serbia. Serbia has recently reaffirmed its desire to participate in SEDM. As part of our efforts to reiterate our unwavering support for Kosovo, the U.S. delegation to SEDM will press for robust "open door" language in the joint communique. We

will also assure the Kosovo government of our steadfast commitment to Kosovo's integration into regional and international structures. Separately, we will hold a dialogue with the Serbian government on our expectations for their participation in SEDM.

14. (U) ACTION ALL 12 SEDM MEMBER COUNTRY POSTS: Department requests that posts deliver the following points on October 16 and report back the same day:

-- The inclusion of Serbia into SEDM would help moderate Serbian policy over time. Increased regional participation would continue to move Serbia on a positive trajectory with its neighbors in the region.

-- The U.S. has advocated for an open door policy for SEDM. Increased regional participation in SEDM and in Euro-Atlantic institutions will continue the positive momentum and stability witnessed over the past few years. Continued strong regional growth and stability will be less likely without the involvement of Serbia.

-- U.S. agreement to join consensus on Serbian membership should result in the lifting of any objections to Montenegro's SEDM membership request. The U.S. believes Montenegro has met all requirements for SEDM membership and we strongly support Montenegro's inclusion along with Serbia.

-- The U.S. will continue to track closely Serbian government actions and statements to verify that Serbia intends to be a

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constructive actor in the region.

-- The U.S. strongly supports Kosovo's inclusion in SEDM and other regional political-military institutions, when ready. The U.S. Government's support for Kosovo and its integration into regional and international organizations is unwavering.

15. (U) In addition to drawing from paragraph 4 points, Embassies Pristina and Tirana are requested to convey the following post-specific points:

Pristina specific points:

-- The U.S. fully supports Kosovo's continuing and future participation in regional organizations, including the participation of security institutions such as the Kosovo Security Force (KSF) when ready.

-- The U.S. will continue to stress to Serbia the importance of constructive engagement in regional organizations, and we will link Serbia's behavior in this regard to the Serbian government's other Euro-Atlantic objectives.

Tirana specific points:

-- The GOA's participation in regional consensus building is important. We believe Serbia's SEDM membership is consistent with our goal of promoting its integration into Euro-Atlantic institutions, which we believe will further moderate Serbia's actions. We urge the GOA to join us in support.

16. (U) Please report responses the same day. Posts may contact EUR/SCE Croatia/Regional Pol-Mil Desk Officer Cathy Westley at (westleyc@state.gov, 202-647-4987) with questions.

17. (U) Department appreciates posts' support in advancing this important issue under such a tight deadline.
CLINTON